

G O S T

jonathon zalakos

cox | jeffs | zalakos | EASS exhibition | 13-29 Oct 2023

Through my work, I pursue a psychoanalytic understanding of objects and the disciplines concerned with producing them: Art, design and craft. This is both an investigation into the maker and the made, while engaging these labels as interchangeable - we are just as much made by our environments as we tend toward making them. If ecological and social trends continue to decline as a result of prevailing social structures, manufacturing, + consumption habits, a reform in our relationship with objects and their making is necessary. This calls for a means to diagnose these problematic inclinations and then a mode of therapeutic intervention.

Toward a method of diagnosis, I strive to understand how signs of the unconscious can manifest in creative processes, offering insight into our intimate relationship with physical things. On a larger scale, this describes the effect our increasingly designed world has on our psychological development and consequential pathological behaviours. Toward a method of therapeutic intervention, I create objects to better understand myself and to enable subversive ways of performing in social contexts for us all.

As an externalisation of one's inner word, jewellery stands out as the relevant medium for my practice. Jewellery reflects our psychological structure, holding the same tension between self representation versus social conformity. Overall I seek to understand the world-making effect of our objects and how we, as makers, can take responsibility for the ideological consequences of our practice.

Jonathon Zalakos is a contemporary jewellery and object maker based in Canberra, on Ngunnawal and Ngambri land. Jonathon seeks to integrate contemporary philosophy with traditional goldsmithing materials and techniques through his practice. He has a particular focus on the psychological influence of the designed world and considers how designers can work toward manifesting alternative, ecologically conscientious ways of being.

Since graduating from the Australian National University in 2022, Jonathon has been the recipient of numerous awards and grants, including the ANU School of Art & Design Graduate Excellence Award, the M16 Exhibition and Residency Award, and the Robert Foster Memorial Grant. His work has been exhibited in various group and solo exhibitions, most recently *Dialogue* at M16 Artspace and *Human, Jewellery, Human* at ANCA. Jonathon has presented and participated at conferences including the JMGA Value Chains Reset and Canberra Design Legacies during the Design Canberra Festival.

In addition to his art practice, Jonathon has experience as a research assistant and sessional lecturer at the Australian National University School of Art and Design, and currently works at the National Gallery of Australia.

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